



U.S. Department of Justice

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July 26, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Milad Knouna

Detroit Party Store Operator Pleads Guilty to Structuring Cash Transactions.

Milad Knouna, 53, of Commerce Township, Michigan, officer and operator of Diamond Liquor Store, Detroit, Michigan, pleaded guilty today to an information charging him with structuring transactions to evade reporting requirements, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced.

Mr. Murphy was joined in the announcement by Maurice Aouate, Special Agent in Charge, Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation Division, Robert Corso, Special Agent in Charge, United States Drug Enforcement Administration, and Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation.

According to court records, between February and June, 2003, Knouna met with undercover agents and knowingly wire transferred purported proceeds of unlawful activity by Western Union from Diamond Liquor Store. After receiving cash amounts of over \$10,000, Knouna would structure the amount, usually about \$2,500 per wire transfer, in order to evade the reporting requirements. These reporting requirements include a Currency Transaction Report for cash transactions over \$10,000, filed with the Internal Revenue Service, and the maintenance of a

log for cash transactions over \$3,000. During this time period, structured cash transactions totaled over \$139,000.

United States Attorney Murphy said, "Structuring monetary transactions is a serious crime. This crime fosters other crimes because of the need to hide the source of the money from illegal activity. We will not tolerate the hiding of ill gotten gains from the government."

The maximum penalty for aiding and abetting in structuring transactions to avoid reporting requirements is up to 10 years imprisonment and a \$500,000 fine.

Sentencing before United States District Court Judge Arthur J. Tarnow is set for November 1, 2007, at 2 pm.

United States Attorney Murphy thanked the Internal Revenue Service Criminal Investigation, United States Drug Enforcement Administration and the Federal Bureau of Investigation for their investigation of the case. The United States was represented by Assistant United States Attorney David J. Portelli and Graham L. Teall.